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Yokosuka Community Celebrates Navy's 247th Birthday



Photos by Ryo Isobe, MC2 Zenaida Roth and SN Darren Cordoviz,
CFAY Public Affairs and Mrs. Anna Sobol



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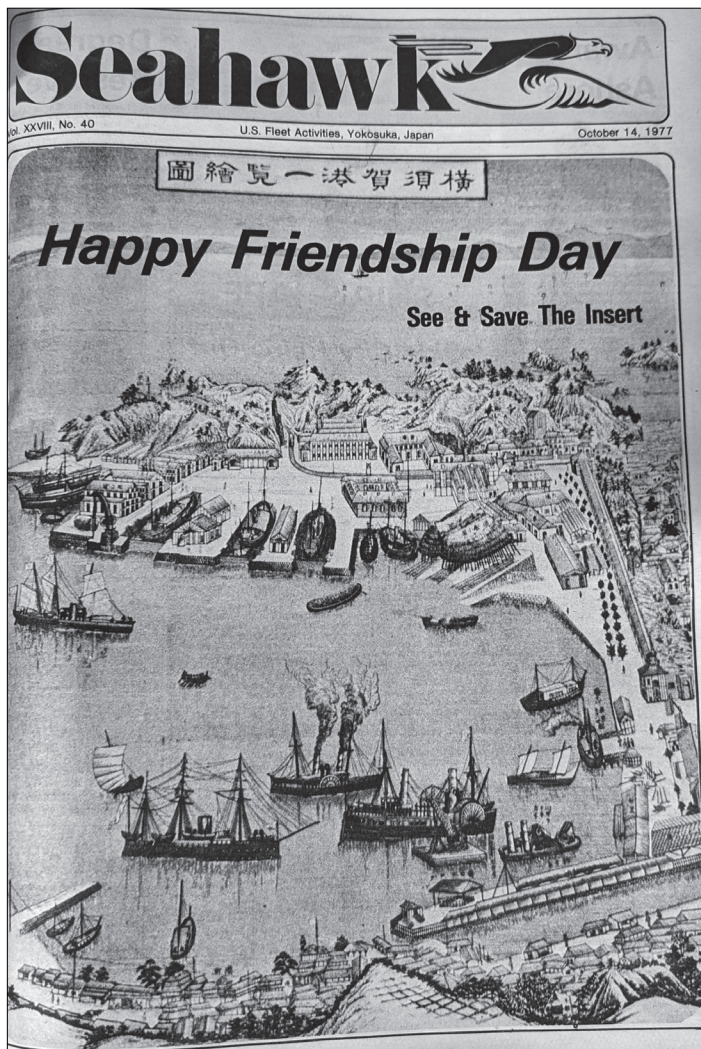
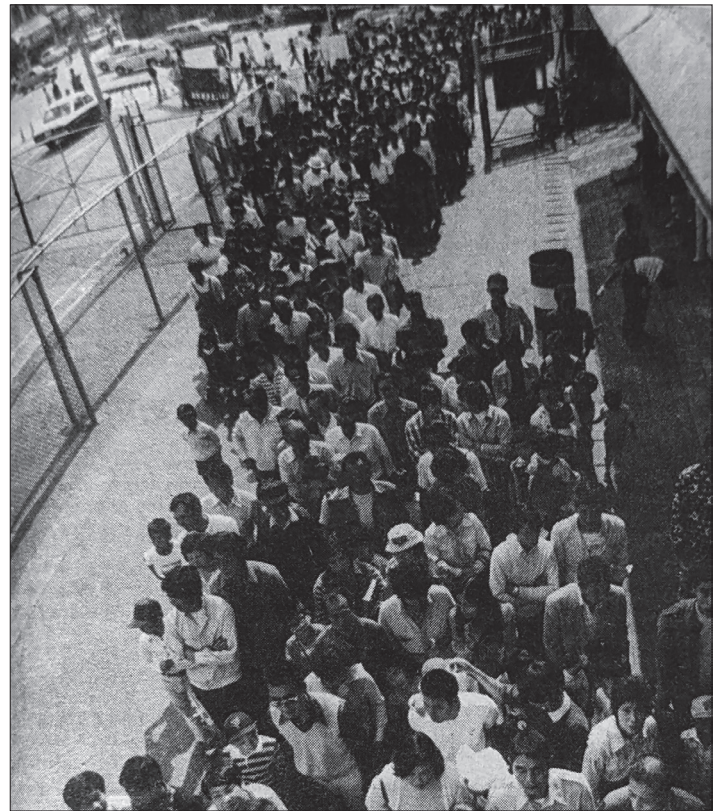


Friendship Day 2022

Story by Garrett Cole, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) welcomed visitors across Japan Oct. 16, as the military base hosted its 44th Friendship Day celebration. The event is a tradition at CFAY, providing an opportunity for the base to show appreciation to its host country's friends and neighbors.

Now, more than ever, the U.S.-Japan alliance is vital to the success of the region. In a Stars and Stripes article, Rear Adm. Carl Lahti, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) and Commander, Navy Region Japan (CNRJ), stated the importance of strengthening relationships and connecting with the host nation.



"For the U.S. Naval Forces Japan and Navy Region Japan teams, our missions are clear: enable the 7th Fleet, enhance and strengthen the U.S.-Japan alliance and serve as the naval component to U.S. Forces Japan," said Lahti. "We will do this by working together as a team and putting people first, creating a positive command climate and culture where everyone can contribute to mission accomplishment."

Open-base events like Friendship Day and Yokota Air Base's Friendship Festival are tools for breaking down barriers and connecting members of the Japanese community with the military communities stationed overseas.

The first Friendship Day was held on Oct. 16, 1976, and was designed to bolster relations between the American military and the Japanese community by offering a look at life on the base and American culture. The tradition continues to this day.

"The last few years, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been unable to hold these types of open base events, so I was pleased that this year, everything came together, and we were able to celebrate," said Capt. Les Sobol, Commander,



Fleet Activities Yokosuka. "It was a pleasure to spend such a wonderful day with our local Japanese community members and to close out the day with an amazing fireworks display."

This year was significant as it was the first open-base event since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Visitors commuted from across the country, and lines started forming as people began securing a place at the event hours prior to the gates opening.

"We have been waiting here approximately from around six in the morning," said Kayo Fushimi, one of the first Japanese community members in line, who came from Kagawa prefecture, "We are looking forward to a ship tour aboard USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19), even though we have gotten aboard the ship when I came here for open-base events. Still, I am excited. We are also looking at foods that are not available outside the gate, such as pizza and so on."

The U.S. 7th Fleet flagship, USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19), was one of the main attractions, and lines for the guided tour weaved around the waterfront. Other displays included a car show, static emergency vehicles, and live music at Berkey Field. Penny Pagan, a local band from onboard CFAY, performed the opening act as visitors began to rush in.

"For the first time in years, Yokosuka threw open the gates to our Japanese neighbors, and CFAY chose us to greet them with

our music," said Larry Criner, Penny Pagan bass player, and CFAY N6 department head. "You can't put a price tag on that, it just doesn't get any better."

Other performers included the Yokosuka City Dancers, the Nuthin' Fancy Band, and the 7th Fleet Band. Entertainment and activities ranged from face painting to street performers, carnival games, train rides, and vendors selling souvenirs and different types of food.

"This hamburger tastes a little different from what I usually have," said Arran Wakamatsu, a 10-year-old child coming to the event for the first time with his family from Chiba prefecture, "It is not oily and a little light."

"That may be because American burgers have more red meat than what we have in Japan," his mother added. "It really tastes more beef-like but with less oil than Japanese beef. Anyway, I really enjoy the food and atmosphere."

At sunset, visitors from on and off base witnessed a 40-minute fireworks display to bring the eventful day to a close.

For more than 75 years, CFAY has provided, maintained, and operated base facilities and services in support of the U.S. 7th Fleet's forward-deployed naval forces, tenant commands, and thousands of military and civilian personnel and their families.

Out and About



Cmdr. Lida Cooper, Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka's (CFAY) chief staff officer, receives her flu shot from Hospitalman Rebecca Hendry, assigned to Naval Medical Readiness Training Command (NMRTC) Yokosuka during a flu vaccine distribution at CFAY Fleet Recreation Center. Service members assigned to CFAY and tenant commands received the vaccine during a flu vaccine distribution at the Fleet Recreation Center onboard CFAY. (Photo by SN Darren Cordoviz, CFAY Public Affairs)

Friendship Day Is Back for



Photos by Ryo Isobe, Tetsuya Morita, Gabrielle Cole, MC1 Ian Carter, MC1 Kaleb Warren, MC2 Connor Houghtaling, MC2 Zenaïda Roth, SN Darren Cordoviz (CFAY Public Affairs), USNH Yokosuka and MWR Yokosuka

the First Time in Three Years!

